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## ZOOLOGY.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW WREN FROM EASTERN FLORIDA.—*Thryothorus Ludovicianus* (Lath.), var. *Miamensis*, Ridgw. Florida Wren. *Diagnosis*.—*Similis T. ludoviciano*, sed major, robustior, et coloribus saturatoribus. Alæ, 2·75; cauda, 2·60; culmen, ·90; tarsus, ·95; dig. med. (sine ungue), ·60.

*Hab.* in Florida orientale (Miami River, Jan., 1874, C. J. Maynard). Typus No. 1864, Mus. R. R.

Similar to *T. Ludovicianus* (Lath.), but larger, stouter, and more deeply colored. Above rusty-chestnut, most castaneous on the back, and becoming browner on the forehead. Wings and tail with indistinct, narrow, dusky bars, and rump with concealed white spots; a wide post-ocular stripe of dark rusty on the upper half of the auriculars, running back into the rusty of the nape. Below deep rusty ochraceous, the sides and flanks showing indistinct bars of darker rusty; chin and crissum soiled whitish, the latter banded with dusky black; a continuous superciliary stripe of pale ochraceous, bordered above by a blackish line along each side of the pileum; cheeks grayish soiled white, with faint crescentic bars of dusky. Bill dusky, the superior tomium and lower mandible pale (lilaceous in life?); feet pale horn color. Wing, 2·75; tail, 2·60; culmen, ·90; tarsus, ·95: middle toe (without the claw), ·60.

*Habitat*.—Miami River, eastern Florida (January 9, 1874; C. J. Maynard). Type No. 1864, Mus. R. R.

REMARKS.—In coloration, this strongly-marked form closely resembles *T. Berlandieri* Baird of the lower Rio Grande (see Hist. N. Am. B., I, p. 144, pl. ix, fig. 2), but the size is greatly larger than even the most northern examples of *Ludovicianus* proper, while *Berlandieri* is smaller. It is very remarkable that the southern form of this bird should be so much larger than the northern one, in direct opposition to a recognized law of climatic variation, but we have another case of this same exception to the rule in *Catherpes Mexicanus* (Swains.), and its northern race, var. *conspersus* Ridgw. (see Hist. N. Am. B., I, pp. 138–140, and III, 503); these examples probably justifying the suggestion made by the writer (*op. cit.*, iii, 503), that an exception to the rule of de-

crease in size to the southward, in resident species, may be made in case of families or groups of families which have in temperate latitudes only outlying genera or species, the increase in this case being to the southward, or towards the region in which the family or group is most highly developed!—ROBERT RIDGWAY.

THE FRIGATE BIRD AND WHITE IBIS IN CONNECTICUT.—The occurrence of *Tachypetes aquilus* in Connecticut is not generally known, Long Island being, up to this time, the northernmost locality on record for this bird. A female of this species was killed at Faulkner's Island in this state in the autumn of 1859, and is now in the collection of Capt. Brooks. It was hovering over the island when shot. Late in the afternoon of May 23, I observed near Milford, Conn., a specimen of *Ibis alba*. I recognized the bird as it flew over me, and following it to a small pond where it went down, discovered it perched upon a tree over the water. I carefully examined it with a good glass, at a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards, and by this means was enabled to note every detail of form and color. It was in full plumage, the white being pure, and the naked skin about the head, bright red. After watching it for a few moments I tried to approach it, but before I came within gunshot it flew, uttering a hoarse cackle as it went off.—GEO. BIRD GRINNELL, *New Haven, Connecticut*.

NEW BIRDS IN KANSAS.—The following additions to the Kansas list have recently been made: *Micropalama himantopus*, near Lawrence, Sept. 9th and 19th, 1874, by W. Osburn; *Calidris arenaria*, same locality, Oct. 7th, 1874, by W. E. Stevens; *Ægithus linaria*, at Baldwin, fourteen miles from Lawrence, March 13th, 1875, by John Holzapfel, also seen in Western Kansas in November, by Mr. Trippe, as recorded in Dr. Cones' "Birds of the Northwest;" *Dendroeca palmarum*, at Topeka, May 6th, 1875, by E. A. Popenol. To these should be added *Ampelis garrulus*, a specimen of which taken at Fort Riley, by Dr. Hammond, is in the Smithsonian collection. The Kansas List now contains 292 species.—F. H. SNOW, *Lawrence, Kansas*.

NEMATOIDS IN PLANTS.—Greef found (SB. Ges. Marburg, 1872) certain tubercles on the root-fibres of *Dodaxia orientalis* full of *Anguillulæ* in all stages, from the egg to the mature and preg-

nant state (these had previously been found in similar galls on the root-fibres of *Sedum* and grasses). On Anguillulæ of *Tulcaria Rivinii* compare Frauenfeld, Verh., Z.-B., Ges. Wien, xxii, p. 396. — *Zoological Record for 1872*.

## GEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGY.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF ROCKS AND ITS GEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE.<sup>1</sup>—This subject the speaker had briefly noticed in a communication to the Association in 1873, on the geology of the Blue Ridge. The change of the rocks in question is a chemical one, which is most obvious in the case of crystalline rocks; the feldspar loses its alkalies and part of its silica, being changed into clay, and the hornblende its lime and magnesia, retaining its iron as peroxide. From this results a softening and decay of the rocks to greater or less depths, so that while the beds still retain their arrangement, and are seen to be traversed by veins of quartz and of metallic ores, they are often so much changed to depths of a hundred feet or more as to be readily removed by the action of water. This phenomenon is well seen in the crystalline rocks of the Blue Ridge, and not less remarkably in those of Brazil, where it has been noticed by many observers, among the latest of which is Professor Hartt. Darwin, who long ago described it, imagined the change to have been effected beneath the sea, but according to the speaker it has been a sub-aërial process, which has been at work during past ages, when the composition of the atmosphere and the climatic conditions differed from those of to-day, and when carbonic acid, aided by warmth and moisture, abounded. He connected it with that slow purification of the atmosphere which, from very early times, has been going on. The alkalies and lime and magnesia, set free in this process, absorbed the atmospheric carbonic acid, and the carbonates carried down to the sea in a dissolved state gave rise to limestones, dolomites, and common salt. Such a process of decay was already active at an early period, and, from facts observed in Missouri by Pumpelly, had affected the iron-bearing feldspar-porphyrries at the commencement of palæozoic time. It was, according to the speaker, from the washing down of the thus decomposed crystalline rocks that all the clays and sands which had gone to build up the sediments

<sup>1</sup> Abstract of a paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at the Hartford Meeting, August, 1874.